REGISTER-HERALD 2-25-2003

Flood waters begin to recede

8,000 still without power due to last week's ice storm

CHARLESTON (AP) — Rivers and streams were starting to return to their banks Monday, as brief streams of sunshine peeked through clouds over West Virginia.

"The situation is improving in much of the state," said Mark Rigsby, spokesman for the state Office of Emergency Services. Flood waters appeared to be going down in some places, he said.

The Potomac River crested Monday at its flood stage of 15 feet near Shepardstown, said Darrell Penwell, director of Emergency Services in Jefferson County. The Shenandoah River crested at 13.3 feet, about a foot above its flood stage, causing minor flooding, he said.

■ Related stories on **Pages 1A and 6A**

"Kinda quiet," Penwell said. "Just pulling out idiots that want to drive through the water."

Officials along the Ohio River reported only moderate flooding. The river crested slightly above flood stage Monday morning at Point Pleasant, where a week earlier as many as 22,000 residents lost power from a winter ice storm.

"Hopefully, we're over the worst of it," said a Mason County 911 dispatcher, who didn't want to give her name.

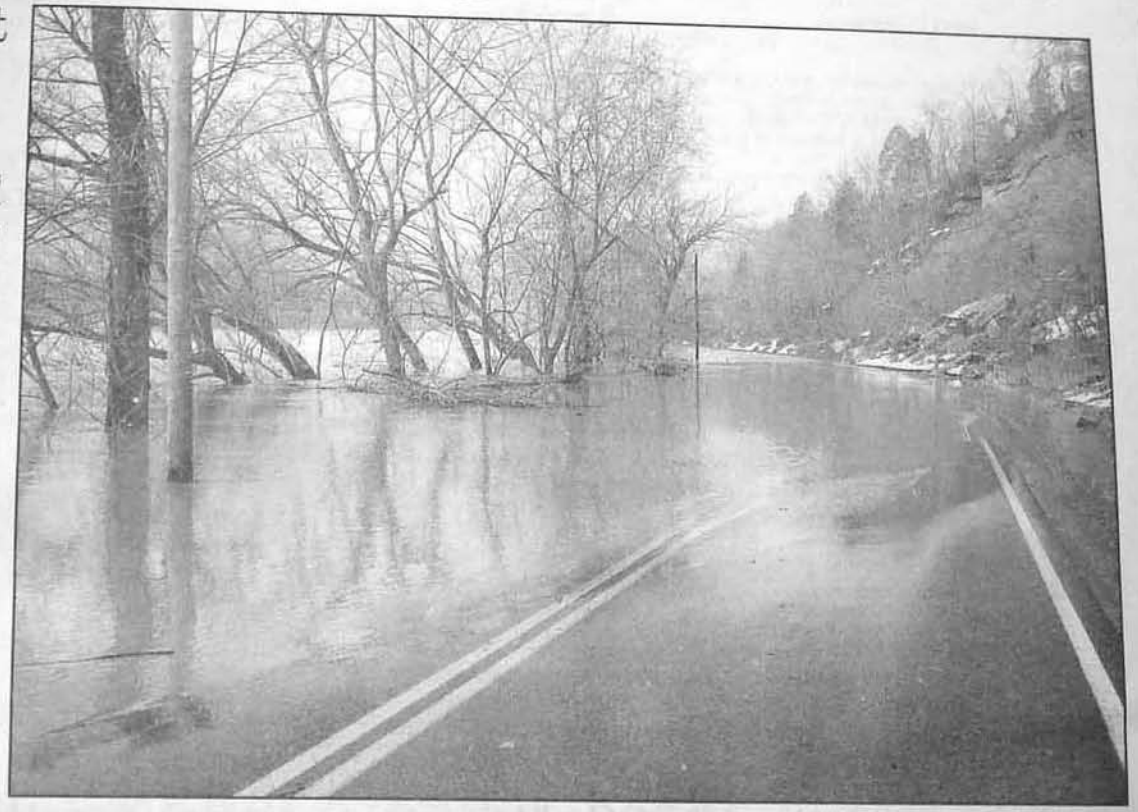
About 3,000 people across West Virginia remained without power Monday due to last week's winter storm.

In Mason and Jackson counties 1,934 residents served by American Electric Power were still without electricity Monday. AEP spokesman Phil Moye said most customers would have their service restored by tonight. However, areas that are remote or heavily damaged might take longer to reach.

Power has yet to be brought back to 1,558 Allegheny Power customers, mostly in Jackson, Roane and Calhoun counties. All but a few should have service back by Monday evening, company spokeswoman Sonya Miller said.

About 50 Charleston homes were flooded along two streets Sunday, forcing the evacuation of about 20 people, said Mark Wolford, the city's emergency services director.

Charleston Fire Chief Grant Gunnoe said his department had been assisting residents throughout Monday with cleanup. But he said it would probably be another day before anyone returned home.



STEVE BRIGHTWELL/THE REGISTER-HERALD

W.Va. 3 near Alderson is covered with rising water Sunday from the Greenbrier River. Rivers and streams were starting to return to their banks Monday. About 3,000 people across West Virginia remained without power Monday due to last week's winter storm.

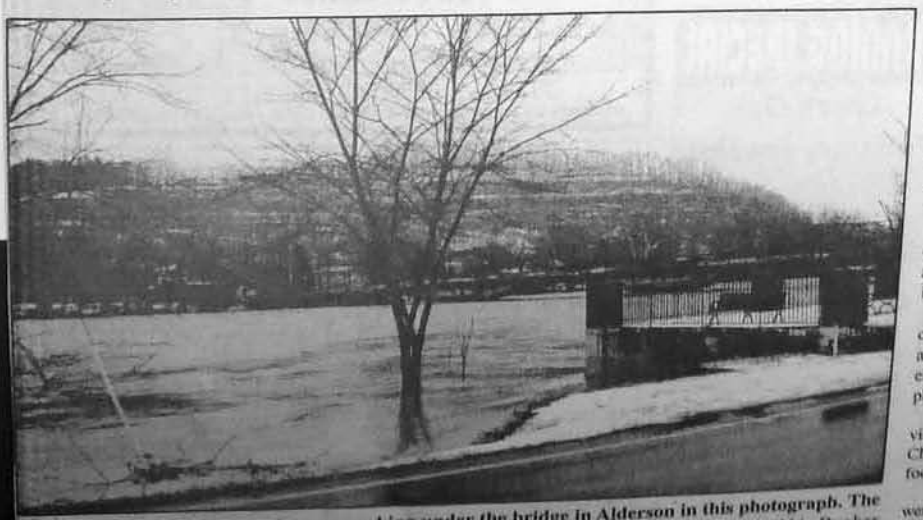
According to Holbrook, Division of Highways employees were made aware of the situation and are working to remedy it.
He said volunteers with the county's emergency management

Flooding Closes Roads

WVDN 2-14-03 2-14-03

In this view from Route 60, one can see the amount of water that surrounded the Caldwell Pentecostal Holiness Church following rains this weekend which caused flooding in some areas of Greenbrier County. *Debbie Dunbar photo*

Water spilling over from Anthony's Creek in Neola covered Route 92 making the roadway, which sits just beyond the fence in this picture, impassable. *Lynn McKinney photo*



High levels of water can be seen rushing under the bridge in Alderson in this photograph. The water ultimately crested there at 3.2 feet above flood stage early Sunday morning. *Debbie Dunbar photo*

By Leslie Hollandsworth

Although not as extensive as anticipated, flooding over the weekend in Greenbrier County covered several roads, making them impassable, and got into the basements of some structures.

Rudy Holbrook, the county's director of emergency management, said the river crested in Alderson at 17.2 feet around 4 AM Sunday. He said 14 feet is considered flood stage for the town.

According to Holbrook, no measurements are currently available for other areas which are prone to flooding, such as Ronceverte and Renick.

He noted calculations will have to be made to determine some water levels because the gauges at Ronceverte and Caldwell have fallen into disrepair and no longer give accurate readings.

Holbrook reported that one house in Caldwell was surrounded by water and experienced flooding in the basement. The Pentecostal Church in that same area also had water in its basement.

Four houses in Alderson got water in their basements, Holbrook said, pointing out it mostly came from nearby streams rather than the river.

He also reported no homes on River Road in Ronceverte were damaged, but said the road had to be closed due to the height of the water.

Travel through Greenbrier County over the weekend was difficult because of the closure of several roads. In fact, some people were left stranded away from their homes when water blocked alternative routes.

In addition to the tunnel at Caldwell, which is usually one of the first areas to become impassable when the water rises, Holbrook said parts of Harts Run, Route 92 and Route 219 were covered.

He noted a six-foot section of U.S. 219 north of Renick was washed out due to a mudslide, and said traffic was being rerouted Sunday.

According to Holbrook, Division of Highways employees were made aware of the situation and are working to remedy it.

He said volunteers with the county's emergency management agency labored throughout the weekend assessing damages and fielding phone calls.

He expressed gratitude to individuals from the St. James Episcopal Church and Wal-Mart, who provided food for the staffers.

Holbrook noted the volunteers were assisted this past week by members of the National Guard.

Folks in Fairlea usually have little to worry about beyond a wet basement or a loss of electrical service when flooding hits the Greenbrier Valley, but this past weekend's ice melt and heavy rainfall turned a relatively small sinkhole at Tuscawilla Farm into a temporary pond. The water in the roadside impoundment threatened to run over the ditchline and into U.S. Route 219 in front of the southern entrance to the Greenbrier Valley Mall. *Debbie Dunbar photo*

Col. Donald Beicktol and Capt. Roy Ramey, along with 12 enlisted soldiers and their vehicles, provided reconnaissance throughout the county.

"They reported on conditions we couldn't see," Holbrook commented.

"They did very good work. They were very conscientious," he added. "We were very happy to have them."

Holbrook said the guardsmen arrived on Tuesday, February 18, and were packing up to leave today.

Noting that numerous military personnel have been shipped overseas, Holbrook said he was grateful guardsmen were sent to the Greenbrier Valley to work with his staff.

"We were definitely lucky to get as many as we did," he stated.

Holbrook also pointed out the county was fortunate not to have had any more water than it did.

"I think we really got lucky with this one," he remarked. "There were very few places that got water."

He also noted there were no flood-related injuries or deaths, to his knowledge.

Vol. 15 No. 28 Valley Ranger Wednesday, January 24, 1996 O m M L

Flood Devastates Greenbrier Valley

By Tina Alvey

Thirty inches of fresh snow blankets the ground by nightfall on Sunday, January 7.

Twelve additional inches of snow falls four days later amid temperatures so cold, nothing can melt in the interim between major snowstorms.

With 42 inches of snow on the ground in Greenbrier County and significantly more in the mountains to the north, local emergency workers fervently hope for a slow, steady melt over the course of several days.

Instead, an unseasonable warm spell coupled with a night of rain dissolves the mass of snow, funneling the moisture into streams and rivers and unleashing the inevitable floodwaters on the valley's communities.

The Greenbrier River crested in Marlinton at 3 p.m. on Friday, January 19, at 20', more than a foot higher than the crest reported during the flood of 1985.

More than 13 hours later, the river crested in Alderson at 25', slightly higher than the '85 crest.

Parallels to the flood of '85 are inevitable. Causing millions of dollars in property damage and 47 deaths, the '85 flood was what is termed the "100-year flood"—meaning a flood of that magnitude should occur only once every century.

Barely ten years later, however, Greenbrier Valley residents find themselves digging mud out of their homes and businesses once more, tallying their losses and making an increasingly tough decision on whether to rebuild yet again or simply abandon property the river seems determined to claim.

A woman in Pocahontas County put it best when she said, "At first I was relieved that this one didn't seem to take as much of people's possessions as the '85 flood did. But now, I'm just angry. Why wasn't something done after that flood to prevent this from happening again? Why weren't we protected from having to go through this again?"

According to figures compiled by the Greenbrier County Office of Emergency Services, the property losses this year could be at least as high as they were in 1985.

Those estimates show Ronceverte and Alderson suffering the highest number of businesses with water damage, while many communities, including those two, saw the water sweep through a substantial number of homes.

Ronceverte's estimated total is 32 businesses and 152 houses in the water.

In Alderson, 30 businesses, 250 houses and one church were damaged to some extent. At least 80 Alderson residents were evacuated to shelters, while many others stayed with relatives or friends.

Four Caldwell businesses were damaged in the flood, as well as 65 houses and one church.

In Rupert, the toll was eight businesses, 122 houses and one church. In that community, some 41 people were evacuated into shelters.

One business in Rainelle reported water damage, but data from the Lilly Park subdivision was unavailable to OES staff at this time, according to Rudy Holbrook, the executive director of the Greenbrier County agency. He said the Lilly Park area contains numerous houses, and he is certain there was flood damage in that section of the town.

Holbrook said no information on damage totals is yet available from the Renick area.

Holbrook was reluctant to put a dollar value on the damage, saying he would now pass the information along to the state OES in Charleston, where "they will put a figure on it."

Rather than sit back and wait for the government to help in the rebuilding effort, local residents with insurance should look to their insurers as the first line of defense, Holbrook advised.

"People with insurance should get their insurance companies on board as quickly as possible," Holbrook said. This haste is necessary because of the magnitude of the flooding along the Ohio River, he explained.

"I believe the state may have to divert the National Guard to the Ohio River area," Holbrook warned. "That

Continued on Page 3

This picture was taken in Alderson along Riverview Avenue looking towards the bridge over the river into Monroe County. The waters of the river had already risen early Friday evening so much that all routes to the bridge were under about two feet of water. The mailbox near the center of the picture gives a good indication of how high the water along the river already was. (C. Jerman photo)

Ronceverte City Council member Tom Morgan and Chief of Police Bill Rose measure the high water mark on the front of Ronceverte's City Hall at 82 inches. All the front windows and doors were broken, and venetian blinds and assorted paper pokes through the broken window. (J. C. Browning photo)

1996 flood set record for lower watershed

BY NERISSA YOUNG
REGISTER-HERALD REPORTER

The flood of 1996 began quietly in January as snowflakes carpeted the Pocahontas County mountains. It ended noisily in the crash of washed-away homes as they swirled down the debris-strewn Greenbrier River.

The good news was no human lives were lost. The bad news was the worst flood of record for the southern end of the watershed — Alderson to Hinton. Four feet of melting snow followed by freezing temperatures left residents digging through ice and frozen mud for their belongings.

Residents along the river's 168 miles thought they were safe this time. The flood of 1985 forced some to higher ground, but it wasn't high enough. Damage estimates topped $96 million, and neighbors argued again the merits of a dam on the largest free-flowing river east of the Mississippi. Some people were still paying debts from the 1985 flood.

As they cleaned up for the second time in 11 years, they wondered what had happened to their river — the placid friend providing a Huck Finn existence for children and adults from Durbin to Hinton. Who was to blame?

NATURE'S FORCE: The aftermath of the winter 1996 flood in Alderson.

Whether it was land development, an abundance of asphalt that blocked drainage, the loss of timber to stop erosion or some intangible change in the Greenbrier's ecology, they knew they could not go back to the Huck Finn days.

Where could they go? River valleys provide the best house lots, business locations and farmland. The towns of Marlinton, Ronceverte and Alderson sprang up because of their desirable topography.

As the mayor of Marlinton told one environmentalist at a public meeting in Lewisburg, town leaders couldn't very well move the community into the hills. Despite the river's constant threat, residents didn't want to give up their land, their towns and their history.

The federal government had promised Marlinton a dam in the 1970s. The project was authorized but never appropriated, and the authorization was eventually withdrawn.

A clarion call for a dam from officials in Pocahontas, Greenbrier, Summers and Monroe counties brought the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers back to update its study. They reported a dam was not cost-efficient and would not provide blanket protection for the watershed. Average annual damages from flooding are $7 million on the Greenbrier, and one-third of those would still occur with a mainstem dam north of Marlinton, the corps concluded.

A $110 mainstem dam with a reservoir was replaced with an $88.5 million proposal to construct levees and floodwalls and evacuate people from the floodplain. The hitch with the second proposal was its requirement of a local cost share that had to come from the state or affected counties.

Meanwhile, the Federal Emergency Management Agency began offering federal money through its hazard mitigation grant program for counties that could identify and voluntarily evacuate residents from the flood zone. The Summers County Commission hired a permit officer to enforce the floodplain and identify property buyouts. Pocahontas, Greenbrier and Monroe commissioners and city councils scrambled to file applications for their share of the money.

Earlier this month, the Monroe County Commission became the new owner of a 20,000-square-foot lot on Glen Ray Road near Alderson. The property owner agreed to give up her land for a price and move out of the floodplain. No permanent buildings may be erected on the lot, and the county is responsible for maintaining the parcel.

The corps received federal money to install rain and river gages to help warn local officials of flood conditions. The Automated Flood Warning System (AFWS) provides rainfall information in 15-minute intervals via computer to the counties' 911 centers. A spokeswoman for the corps said all gages and computers have been installed. Personnel have been trained, and the system is in operation. The completed system has been turned over to the state Office of Emergency Services.

Data is on the Web at www.afws.net/data/wv. Click on the respective county stage area to see current conditions.

Meanwhile, river residents do what they have always done — watch and wait.

'Finally, there was no place to go but the attic'

BY BEV DAVIS
FEATURES EDITOR

After weeks of unseasonably dry weather, parts of eastern and southern West Virginia were swept into mass devastation by floods in November 1985.

Among the hardest hit areas in southern West Virginia were Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties, where houses were washed off their foundations, bridges and roads were wiped out and families clung to tree tops, attic walls and house roofs for dear life.

High water claimed three

family was trapped for more than 12 hours with only one bottle of milk for the baby.

"Steve and I sat together with the baby on my lap. The girls were laying on boards covered with blankets. We heard the porch break off, then we just started floating. We floated over something. I think it was the satellite dish. We floated about a quarter of a mile before we hit a box trailer. That's all that saved us from going further," Jane said.

The following morning, rescuers saw movement through a vent near the roof. "We took out the vent and enlarged the hole to bring them out. It was all I could do to keep from crying when we brought out that 2-week-old baby," one of the volunteers said.

Summers County Hospital became an island unto itself when flood waters swirled across the bridges and roads into and around the city. Some employees had to remain in the hospital for more than 24 hours.

More than 10,000 West Virginian Power customers in Greenbrier, Monroe and Pocahontas counties were out of electricity and many without telephone service for several days.

Heavy rains caused numerous accidents in Fayette and Raleigh counties. Gov. Arch Moore estimated flood damage in West Virginia to be about $200 million. Following a helicopter tour of flood-ravaged areas, Moore said highway damage in one area alone was $17 million and that replacement of 20 destroyed bridges could run as high as $30 million.

emergency equipment. In Marlinton, more than 800 people were evacuated from their homes.

Marlinton couple Steve and Jane Jones and their children, Marlena, 6, Allison, 2, and Stephanie, 2 weeks old, literally rode out the storm in the attic of their two-story home.

"When we realized we couldn't get out, we kept climbing higher in the house. Finally, there was no place to go but the attic," they told reporters following a dramatic rescue. Steve had torn apart bunk beds to make ladders so the family could reach the attic through a hole he made in the bedroom ceiling. The

RAMPAGING RIVER: The 1985 flood washed out a bridge over the Greenbrier River at Pence Springs.

SKI

CONTINUED FROM 4

for the general public to use — not until 1971. It was then that Canaan Valley Resort opened its hillsides to skiers. In 1974, Snowshoe opened with nine slopes and three chair lifts. By the 1979-80 ski season, Snowshoe had one additional lift and a total of 20 trials. Both areas built and eventually expanded lodging facilities.

"The 1980s was a pivotal decade for the ski industry in West Virginia," an article in the tourism division's West Virginia Outdoors magazine says. "In the early 1980s, downhill ski resorts Silver Creek, Timberline and Winterplace opened, and cross-country specialists Elk River and White Grass opened. Showshoe and Canaan Valley expanded with trails, slopes and lifts."

During the '80s, Snowshoe in Pocahontas County experienced growth along with financial problems. Rapid expansion — 250 condominiums in two years — resulted in operational problems that sent the guest list plummeting from 253,000 in 1982 to only 115,000 visits during the 1984-85 season. The resort declared bankruptcy.

But after passing through a handful of ownerships and managers, the resort continued improving, adding sister resort Silver Creek in 1990.

In 1996, a Canadian firm called Intrawest bought the resort and invested more than $70 million in the form of new high speed detachable lifts, new slopes and snowmaking, new mountain home complexes and a mountaintop village including retail shops and restaurants. Intrawest owns numerous resorts throughout North America.

Snowshoe Mountain offers 56 slopes and trails and plenty of chair lifts to reach them.

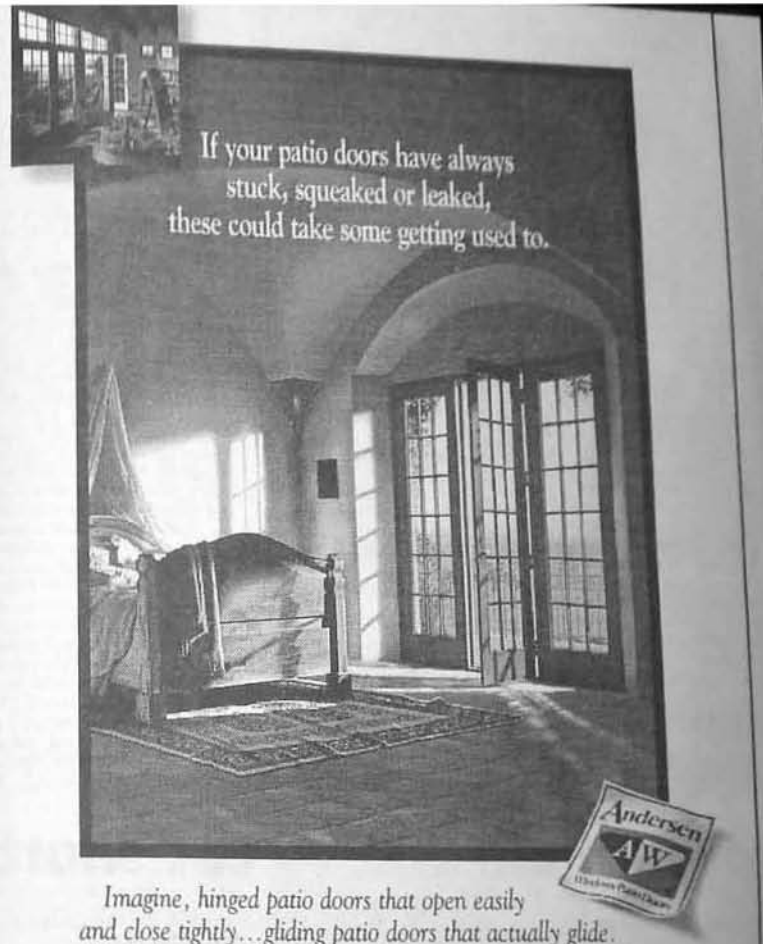
Timberline opened in Tucker County in 1983 with four slopes. By the '90s, Timberline had added double and triple chair lifts, a rope tow, lift service all the way to the top of the mountain, new trails and a new restaurant and pub. It is owned by a group of Philadelphia investors who purchased the resort in 1985. It currently offers 35 slopes and trails and lots of nearby lodging.

Winterplace, located between Beckley and Princeton at Ghent, also opened in 1983, consistently growing each season after that. By 1996-97, Winterplace had upgraded and expanded to 27 slopes and trails, a 10,000-square-foot, mid-mountain facility, The Mountain House, more ski rentals and increased snowmaking power. The next season, the resort added a snowtubing park and more snowmaking. Last season Winterplace added more rental skis, snowboards and snowblades to accommodate a growing number of alternative snow sports enthusiasts.

Canaan Valley also upgraded and expanded throughout the '80s. Today the park offers 34 slopes and trails, one quad chair lift, two triple chair lifts and a 250-room lodge and 23 cabins.

For all the parks, the 1990s marked the recognition of a fast-growing alternative snow sports market. Resorts added special facilities for snowboarders and snow tubers.

Elk River, near Snowshoe, and White Grass, near Canaan Valley and Timberline, each offers 75 kilometers of cross-country skiing trials have continued to welcome an increasing number of cross-country skiers and snowshoers over the last 25 years.



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LOCAL

Rampaging Greenbrier Takes Toll

Rising waters approach the bottom of the old bridge in

A gloomy sky illuminates the flood damage in Ron-

yards from its foundation to rest against a light pole. On

Alderson.

Lives Lost, Damage Heavy From Marlinton To Hinton

by Frank Spicer

The usually placid Greenbrier River went on a rampage this past week, taking a toll in lives and property in a stretch from Marlinton to Hinton.

Dead in the flood waters were Mrs. Rose Jewell Skeens Mick, 73, of Nettie, Nicholas County; Darron Joshua Skeens, 4, of Renick; and Mrs. Ruby Alice Bender Skeens, 56, also of Renick. The three died in raging flood waters near Huntersville late Monday as the rapidly rising Greenbrier caught many river area residents by surprise.

Evacuation efforts by Emergency Medical Teams and Volunteer Firefighters, as well as other volunteers, kept the death toll from being much higher.

Eight feet of water flooded the town of Marlinton, effectively devastating that city's daily life, causing electricity and telephone outages, and contaminating the water supply. As of Friday, cleanup operations were well under way, with power and telephone service restored and the pumping station once again supplying that vital commodity to the town's citizens.

Marlinton is but one of several hard-hit areas in the record flooding by the Greenbrier. Homes and mobile homes in the Renick area either sustained major damage or were destroyed completely, with cleanup efforts hampered by the lack of electricity.

One major concern as the floodwaters moved south on Tuesday was the breaking away of the bridge at Anthony. It broke loose from its moorings on the banks, and began floating downstream. There was major concern over what would happen if the bridge, still substantially intact, should collide with either the bridge over Interstate 64 or the Route 60 bridge at Caldwell. Fortunately, it lodged in some trees approximately two miles upstream from Caldwell by Tuesday evening, and the concern eased.

In Caldwell, the swollen river backed up Howard's Creek, sending swampish water into most of the community, washing one home near the creek away entirely, and damaging almost every home on the south side of Route 60.

Areas of Ronceverte, further downstream, were devastated by the water and the force of the current. The Monroe Avenue and River Oaks area of the city were hardest hit, although water reached across Edgar Avenue and into Main Street at the river's crest. Lack of power hampered cleanup efforts into Friday, and water as of this writing is in very short supply. Rescue workers were evacuating people from rooftops late Tuesday afternoon, and some businesses sustained near total losses.

Alderson was hit with flood waters 11 feet above flood stage, causing substantial damage to homes and businesses along state Route 63. Power remained available to Alderson's residents, although the water supply was contaminated and residents were advised to boil their water for at least ten minutes before using it for drinking or cooking.

Further downstream, the tale of destruction continued as homes between Alderson and Pence Springs were either badly damaged or washed away entirely. As of press time, no accurate estimate of the number of homeless was available.

Pocahontas, Greenbrier Summers are among the counties Governor Moore has asked the federal government to declare a disaster area, and a resolution has been introduced in Congress to supply Federal assistance by the Corps of Engineers at no cost to the state for the repair work. At least $30 million in bridge replacement or repair will be needed, the homeless will need to find shelter, and the damage to individual residences and businesses is staggering. Final plans by State and Federal Governments concerning the nature and timing of their assistance have not yet been announced.

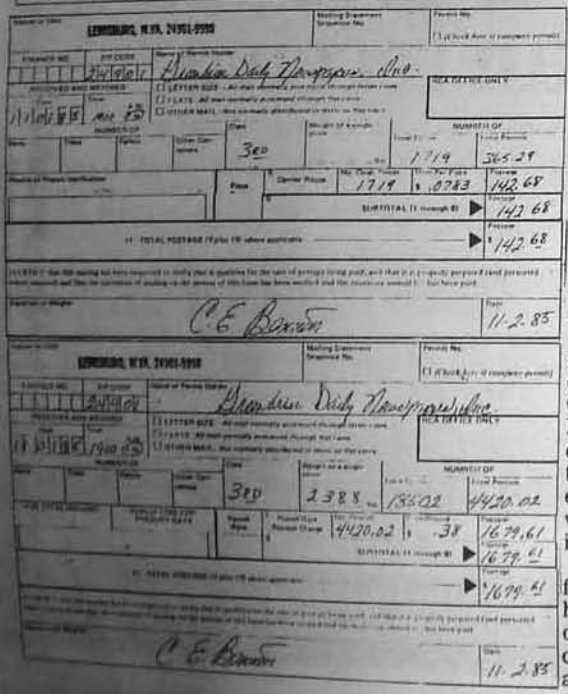
Many Valley residents have said that this flood was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. They also said that once is once more than enough.

ceverte Tuesday as rising Greenbrier River waters washed a small building 50

the right is Appalachian Electronics, which received heavy flood damage.

In Caldwell, rising flood waters filled this one-story house in a field across Route 60 from the restaurant at the stockyard.

RANGERS MAILED LAST SATURDAY



Small Business Guidance

Persons considering going into a small business or who are encountering problems in an existing business can receive guidance on Tuesday, November 12 - Job Service Office - 209 W. Main Street, Ronceverte, WV 24970. Individual client conferences will be conducted from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This service is provided by the Small Business Division of the Governor's Office of Community and Industrial Development. This unit is designed as a one stop center to aid persons who are in an existing small business or who are considering going into a small business.

Individual client conferences are scheduled every half hour. For appointments or additional information, contact the Job Service Office at 647-5655.

Proceeds From Concert For Flood Victims

All proceeds from Carnegie Hall's Sunday, November 10th, concert will be applied to direct flood relief in Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Summers and Monroe Counties, according to the Hall's Managing Director Charles A. Goddard.

"Bill Fearnley and Betty Shaver had originally agreed to give a benefit organ and piano concert for Carnegie Hall's Restoration Fund," Goddard said. "However, the immediate needs of our neighbors, who have suffered greatly by the recent floods, are much greater right now than the needs of the Hall."

"Mr. Fearnley and Mrs. Shaver immediately agreed to contribute their talent Sunday for direct flood relief work," Goddard said today.

Carnegie Hall has a seating capacity of 579 persons. Tickets for the 3 p.m. concert are priced at $5 per person and will be available at the door Sunday. "We suggest that persons withing to help the direct flood relief effort to get to the Hall early to be assured of a seat," Goddard added.

Word On Selling Lottery Tickets

West Virginians wanting to become licensed agents to sell lottery tickets will receive word regarding their applications by late November, Ralph Peters, Director of the West Virginia Lottery, said today.

Approximately 3,500 applications have been sent out to retail businesses since the first mailing October 11. More than 1,000 have been returned and of that number, over 800 have been entered into the lottery's computer system for processing; no licenses have been issued, Peters said.

Each applicant must have an operating business and show financial stability, good moral character and have no felony record. The Lottery Commission's investigative staff also has asked the state Tax Department to examine the financial books of all applicants to see if there are any state liens against them.

In addition, each business owner and anyone who owns at least 10 percent of a firm's stock must be fingerprinted.

"A tedious yet thorough process, its sole purpose is to ensure integrity in the system," said Peters.

218 chain stores have submitted applications to date. The largest of those include: Go Mart, with 37 stores, and Shop-a-Minit, with 28 stores statewide. Among those requesting applications are: Rite-Aid Discount Pharmacies, with 96 stores; Heck's, with 46 stores; and 7-11, with 43 stores statewide.

"I can't stress enough the importance of reading the application forms carefully," said Peters. "If potential agents fail to answer every question, it will delay the processing of their license."

"For instance, every applicant must submit his business tax number, or if the business sells liquor or beer, we need those license numbers as well."

Peters added that the lottery commission has set up a special hotline number to assist potential agents with questions or problems they may have regarding their application. The toll-free number is 1-800-WVA-CASH or 1-800-982-2274.

Turkey, Ham Dinner

The Fairlea A.R.P. Church will hold a turkey and ham dinner on November 9 from 4 to 7 p.m. The charge will be $5 for adults and $2.50 for children under 12.

Brain artery bypass may do more harm than good—study
Page A6

Dow-Jones average past 1,400 mark
Page B6

For Bill Salmons, Saturday's game may be just the start
Page D1

CLOUDY
Thirty percent chance of afternoon showers with a high near 69°F.
Details on Page 2.

Metro Huntington FINAL

The Herald-Dispatch

35 Pages, 4 Sections | Huntington W.Va., THURSDAY Morning November 7, 1985 | 35 Cents Single Copy

16 die in floods; 40 missing

Governor surveys flooded counties

By TOM D. MILLER
Chief correspondent

CHARLESTON — Returning from a helicopter tour yesterday of some of the state's most severely affected flood areas, Gov. Arch A. Moore Jr. said he had seen small towns that "are gone."

"And when I say gone, I mean gone," he said. "You look and see nothing but the basement shell."

During a stop in Clarksburg late yesterday afternoon, Moore met with U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., and federal officials also here to assess the damage.

Byrd said he was confident President Reagan will declare the 22-county disaster area requested by Moore.

Moore said he sent a telegram to the White House last night, asking for quick action. He said he will not

Additional flood coverage appears on Pages A3, B1 and D6.

The worst is over for most areas

From staff, AP dispatches

At least 16 people are now known to be dead as a result of three days of record flooding in the eastern half of West Virginia, and another 40 are missing.

Gov. Arch A. Moore Jr. delivered the grim statistics at a press conference last night at the Capitol following an afternoon helicopter tour of some of the hardest hit areas.

The good news — relatively speaking — is that the worst apparently is over.

With few exceptions, streams and rivers throughout the state have crested and flood waters are receding. Only Harpers Ferry in the easternmost corner of the state was still awaiting waters to crest last night.

The National Weather Service says today's forecast for the eastern regions of West Virginia calls for widely scattered showers, clearing by tonight or early tomorrow.

As flood waters recede, state officials are turning their attention to relief efforts.

Some communities remain cut off from the outside world, and food, medical supplies and safe drinking water are in dangerously short supply. Health and sanitation are major concerns in some of the hardest-hit areas.

Flooding facts, figures

■ **TOLL:** 16 people known dead, 40 missing.

■ **HARDEST HIT:** 22 counties in the eastern half of the state.

■ **RELIEF:** 25 emergency shelters; nearly $100,000 in food to stricken areas.

■ **PROPERTY DAMAGE:** Undetermined. Federal Emergency Management Agency officials are assessing damages to help the state qualify for disaster relief.

■ **FORECAST:** Streams and rivers receding, weather clearing. Harpers Ferry is the only place still waiting for flood waters to crest.

■ **QUOTE:** "I'm in the car business, and I've got cars scattered all over town." — Marlinton merchant Delbert Reed, surveying damage of the flood waters.

■ **LOCALLY:** The Ohio River is running high but expected to crest tomorrow morning in Huntington at 4.5 feet below flood stage.

federal government and the regular 1985 legislative session begins in two months.

Moore began his visit yesterday in Weston and said there he found the community "well on the road to recovery."

But efforts to get a public water supply back in use by 8 p.m. last

(See ➡ MOORE, Page A2)

Herald-Dispatch/Lee Bernard

Flooded Alderson, W.Va., as seen from the air

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials have arrived to help determine damage, and Moore said their reports would bolster his request to President Reagan for federal disaster aid in 22 counties.

Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., who met Moore on his visit to Clarksburg, said the state's chances of receiving the federal aid look good.

Moore said the state highway department estimates that damages

National Guard troops were guarding washed-out stores in Marlinton, Grantsville and Petersburg after looting was reported.

The 16 confirmed deaths were reported in these counties: five in Pendleton, four in Pocahontas, two each in Tucker and Upshur and one each in Grant, Hardy and Preston.

Few victims had been identified because the bodies frequently were

(See ➡ DEAD, Page A2)

Victims will live with flood long after waters are gone

By DAVE PEYTON
Of The Herald-Dispatch staff

Staff writer Dave Peyton and chief photographer Lee Bernard flew from Huntington to Greenbrier Airport at Lewisburg, W.Va., yesterday for an aerial view of the devastated flood area between Lewisburg and Hinton. In the following report, Peyton records his impressions of the Greenbrier Valley.

From 2,000 feet up, the Greenbrier Valley is still beautiful. The leaves are off the trees and the cool fall weather has produced an abundant crop of bright green grass. Here and there, pine forests dot the landscape. The farmhouses on the rolling hills stand proud and white against the gray and green background provided by nature.

But look more closely, along the banks of the meandering Greenbrier River, and the scene changes. The muddy river has receded from a record flood. And what it has left can only be described as misery for those who lived on the valley floor.

The Greenbrier twists and turns like a writhing snake between Lewisburg and Hinton. Roads flank either side of the river. Nearly all the houses and mobile homes between the roads and the river were inundated. Yesterday afternoon the water had receded enough so that residents could return to make the first tentative steps at cleaning up. Multi-colored carpets, wet with water, covered lawns. Towels, sheets and other linens were draped over shrubbery to dry. But the cold, humid wind that blew through the cloud-covered valley gave little hope that anything would dry.

Homes that had been built very close to the river, to take advantage of the ordinarily spectacular view, were damaged the most. The decks that many had built over the river slumped toward the muddy water. Some had actually fallen into the Greenbrier.

But if the sight of damaged homes was bad, there was an even more ominous scene. Here and there, foundations appeared on the valley floor where, a day or two before, houses and mobile homes stood. They simply had disappeared in the raging water.

In one area just upstream from Pence Springs, it appeared an entire neighborood of a half dozen houses or more had been swept away by the water. All that was left were foundations. A lone pickup truck was in a driveway near one of the foundations. Its occupants — a man and a woman — appeared to be wandering aimlessly among the few ruins that were left.

Below that area swept clean by the flood, the remnants of a bridge remained. Area residents said that

(See ➡ VICTIMS, Page A2)

Herald-Dispatch/Tim Grobe

Sandbags, shelves, groceries and debris litter the Ashland station in Alderson.

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The Herald-Dispatch
Vol. 85 No. 311
A Gannett Newspaper

A day to box up and be locked up

By TIM R. MASSEY
Of The Herald-Dispatch staff

Democrat Robert R. Nelson found himself in unfamiliar pinstripes yesterday inside a "jail" at Old National Bank just 12 hours after being cloaked in victory as Huntington's first strong mayor under a new charter.

Just a few hundered feet away at his cramped 5th Avenue headquarters, Republican Ted T. Barr was wearing work clothes as he began removing the remnants of his first unsuccessful political campaign.

The difference in winning and losing was easily apparent.

Nelson was jovial as he took part in the American Cancer Society's fund-raising "Arrest Day," speaking to the news media from behind makeshift bars.

"They arrested me for being elected mayor of Huntington and deserting the state Senate," Nelson said between telephone calls to friends in an effort to raise his $1,000 bond. "I pleaded guilty to the first but not guilty to the second. A lot of my colleagues are glad to get rid of me in Charleston.

"Anyway, the food's not bad here (pizza), but there are a lot of unsavory characters," he said, jokingly nodding toward cellmate Don Norris, Huntington police chief.

Partly because of the extended stay inside the "big house," Nelson postponed a planned press conference until today. At that time, he is expected to name members of his transition team, who will act as advisors during an interim period before he takes office Jan. 1.

The mayor-elect also said he planned to talk yesterday with Interim Chief Executive Officer Steve Williams.

"I want to ask his advice so we can make the transition from the interim government to the strong mayor as smooth as possible," Nelson said. "I also want to get some input from Steve on the department heads. Also, I'd like to see if I can't get some working space for the transition team."

Looking back to his 1,282-vote victory Tuesday night over Barr, Nelson said he has learned not to react to highs and lows in his life.

"You ask the people to vote for you, and they can either say yes or no," he said. "I guess it comes from my Marine Corps training, but I try

(See ➡ DAY, Page A2)

Opinion
PAGE 4

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Matthew 5:4

Sports
PAGE 9

Mountain Messenger
Sunday
November 10, 1985
Published in Ronceverte, WV

Flood aftermath: Area digs out of the mess

By CHERYL GRIFFITH

Area citizens are still cleaning up their homes and businesses today after record floods tore through Greenbrier County Tuesday, not only leaving damaged and destroyed property, but also cutting off power and water supplies.

Red Cross assessments as of Friday estimated that of the 422 buildings and homes in the flood plane area of the county, some 36 buildings were completely destroyed, 98 were seriously damaged, and some 164 suffered minor damage. The Red Cross figure does not account business damage, and these figures were expected to increase.

Some businesses were either damaged or destroyed in the worst flooding ever in the area.

For many, the high waters came as a surprise shock.

"I didn't think it would get to the door. I got diapers and a few clothes for the kids. We just got out of there," Alderson resident Jody Brookman said.

Brookman, along with husband Jimmy and two small children, were then shuffled from Alderson Elementary to Alderson Junior High, then on to Greenbrier East for temporary shelter.

Destiny might have been a bit kinder for the David Campbells of Ronceverte if the flooding had occurred some 24-48 hours later.

The Campbells, scheduled to move from their recently-sold home on River Road to a nearby apartment on Wednesday, lost most of their furniture.

Some clothing and a TV were moved to an adjacent building on home not only suffered the damage to the house, but the loss of some of his furniture as well. He had already moved some furniture in before the flood waters emerged.

Flood damage in Ronceverte was extensive, but no lives were lost. Water reached Main Street of Ronceverte, and devastating losses occurred to businesses and homes in the Monroe Avenue and River Oaks area.

Homes were knocked off their foundations, and Island Park was virtually destroyed. The Ronceverte substation of West Virginia Power received extensive damage, causing a power outage that plagued citizens in the area until late Thursday. Areas affected included the entire city of Ronceverte, parts of Lewisburg and areas north of town, and Caldwell.

Residents of Route 60 south of Caldwell were evacuated safely Tuesday as the swollen Greenbrier backed its way into Howard's Creek.

Some 100-150 inmates at the Federal Correctional Institution for Women aided the clean-up effort in Alderson after the Greenbrier crested to 24.5 feet at 11 p.m. on Tuesday. The flood stage there is 14 feet. The 1918 flood had crested to 22 feet.

Water left its mark on many haomes in the town, knocking homes off their foundations, turning cars over, and sending homes and trailors down the river, never to be seen again.

Streets in and around Alderson were blocked by water, including portions of WV Route 3, 12, and 63.

For the Elbert Millers of Alderson, fighting flood waters is

The power of the flood waters was evidenced by the fate of this car in Alderson.

something they are used to. They went through Hurricane Camille in Alabama years ago, and experienced the Ohio River flood some seven years ago as residents in Ohio.

"I can live with Camille," said Brenda Miller on Thursday in the cleaning-up process. "We had plenty of warning. We knew ahead

"I'm upset with the Weather Bureau here. We have three TV channels coming in here, and they all said different things. Communication is lousy," continued Mrs. Miller.

"There's no central source for communication," piped in Mr. Miller. "I'm a little upset, but bitterness, no. This is nature."

opening just this past fall, carried some 24 to 25 inches of muddy, oily water through its new interior. The building suffered no structual damage, and the boilers were not damaged.

Greenbrier County Superintendent of Schools Gordon Hanson said Friday, however, that two frame buildings adjacent to the

Edgar Avenue in Ronceverte before the waters crested.

Contents of Red Nickells grocery store in Alderson lay strewn on the floor. Nickell, who had some flood insurance, never expected the flood water to rise over the store steps.

Briefly...

Lewisburg council meeting date changed

The regular November meeting of the Lewisburg City Council has been changed from the third Tuesday to the second Tuesday. It will be held November 12 at 7:30 p.m. in the councilroom of City Hall.

The public is welcome to attend.

Green Mitt and Old White Garden Clubs to meet

The Green Mitt Garden Club and the Old White Garden Club of White Sulphur Springs will attend a joint gathering of members Tuesday evening November 11, 7:30 p.m. in the Community House Lounge. Following short separate business sessions of the two clubs, an auction of handcrafted Christmas items will be held starting at 7:50 with Jane Withers of the Old White as auctioneer assisted by the club presidents, Rosemary Bugas and Donna Sams. Green Mitt members are asked to bring their 10 foot strings of popped corn for trimming the Christmas Tree at the gazebo.

Lewisburg BPW Club to meet

The Lewisburg Business and Professional Women's Club will hold its regular monthly meeting at Fort Savannah Inn in Lewisburg, on November 12, 1985, at 6:30 p.m.

The speaker for the evening will be Jan Adkins, a Psychologist and instructor at Concord College. Her topic will be Stress. All members are encouraged to attend and to bring a prospective member.

Any member of the public who would be interested in hearing this informative talk by Dr. Adkins, may contact the President of the Lewisburg BPW Club, Nadine Smith, at 645-1276 for reservations.

The Lewisburg Foundation holds meeting

You are cordially invited to attend the annual meeting of The Lewisburg Foundation November 13, 1985, at 7:00 p.m. in the Old Stone Presbyterian Church fellowship hall.

Mr. Henry Browne of Browne, Eichman, Dalgliesh & Gilpin, Architects, Charlottesville, Virginia, will introduce and review a new study entitled "Revitalization Guidelines for Historic Lewisburg". This project has been jointly funded by the City of Lewisburg, the Lewisburg Foundation and a grant from the West Virginia Department of Culture & History. Refreshments will be served.

Luncheon benefits Greenbrier Library

The Annual Salad Luncheon will be held on Thursday, November 14, at Lewisburg Methodist Church from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

A donation of $3.50 is requested for adults for "all-you-can-eat". A wide variety of salads, desserts and beverages will be available.

All proceeds will benefit Greenbrier County Library.

Lewisburg plans Christmas parade

The Historic Lewisburg Association is sponsoring a Christmas Parade in Lewisburg on Friday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m.

The parade will line up in front of Lewisburg Junior High School at 6:00 p.m. and will proceed down Washington Street and end at the Old Stone Church.

Entries in the parade will be judged and a $50.00 prize awarded to each of the following categories: Best chorus or choir, Best float or walking entry, Best High School Band, Best Junior High School Band. The winners will be announced at the Greenbrier Valley Bank parking lot immediately following the parade.

Any persons or groups interested in participating, please call 645-7110 before 5:00 p.m. and 647-4774 after 5:00 p.m. Or mail your entry to: Christmas Parade, 120 E. Washington Street, Lewisburg, WV 24901.

Bowhunters' Association organizes

There will be an organizational meeting of the Greenbrier Valley Bowhunters' Association on Sunday, November 10, at 2:30 p.m. on the archery range at Hart's Run in the Greenbrier State Forest.

Dues will be $10.00 and will be used to make necessary repairs to the target stands and replace the straw and animal targets. Any money left over will be used to sponsor tournaments and purchase trophies.

All serious bowhunters and archers are encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Bill Burns at 645-6731 after 5:30 p.m. any day during the week.

Help available for small businesses

Persons considering starting a small business or who are encountering problems in an existing business can receive guidance on Tuesday, November 12, at the Job Service Office, 209 W. Main Street, in Ronceverte. Individual client conferences will be conducted from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. and will be scheduled every half hour.

For appointments or additional information, contact the Job Service Office at 647-5655.

over the steps," said the Alderson store merchant. "I did put some stuff on a higher shelf, but, heck, I even left change in the cash register. It was so darn quick."

Nickell, who does have some flood insurance, estimates his business loss to be around $40,000. But despite the loss, he maintained his sense of humor.

"I do not know if I'll go back into business. Right at the moment my store is for sell. Quite a few people have wanted to buy it in the past. Now here's their chance. It's real cheap," he quips. "If you bring a shovel, you can get a lot of groceries," he continues as he glances over the store floor strewn with packages of instant mashed potatoes, onions, snack foods, and cough drops."

John and Pat Highlander of Alderson lost two businesses as well as their mobile home in Tuesday's flooding.

The Highlander's H&B Gulf Station and Jim's Place, a newly opened pool room, suffered extensive damage.

The Big Wheel restaurant, on the other hand, was in full operation Thursday afternoon. Waitresses were scurrying around carrying food to their customers and talking about how the flood missed their establishment.

"Water hit the parking lot, and we had sand-bagged in front of the windows to try and keep so much mud from entering. The water just never got that far," one waitress stated.

Alderson Elementary School was not so lucky. The $380,000 facility,

insulation in the [illegible] water and the ruined also, according to Hanson.

The frame buildings which housed kindergarten classes, will either have to be renovated or re-constructed, and the school superintendent is hopeful they can be rebuilt with federal assistance money.

Meanwhile, the kindergarten classes will probably be moved to the new elementary building, moving the music room, school library, gifted classroom, and speech therapist elsewhere. The school cafeteria will also undergo some renovation, and tile and carpet will have to be replaced throughout the facility.

Alderson Elementary is expected to re-open Tuesday, although Hanson said Friday no final decision on the kindergarten classes will be made until Monday night.

Hanson, along with principal Karen Cadle and Greenbrier County Maintenance Director Bill Huff, worked frantically Tuesday to save books and supplies.

"Ninety-five percent of the books were saved," said Hanson. He went on to describe the flood as "unbelievable".

"I watched water pick up the dumpster like a thimble. I saw cattle floating down the river," he stated.

"We'll probably never see a flood like this in our lifetime again. It probably would have been worse if the school had been built below the 101-year flood level. We actually built the school twenty inches higher than what the architect recommended. I'm glad we did. It could have been worse."

Ronceverte resident Ethel Price gets attention from "volunteer" nurses at the temporary Emergency Services Center at Greenbrier East.

President Clinton's

21 counties to get federal assistance in flood aftermath

By John Raby
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Clinton gave federal disaster status to 21 West Virginia counties Thursday, making them eligible for a variety of government assistance.

The declaration was made as the Ohio River crept over its banks for the second time in a week and just hours after Gov. Gaston Caperton sent a formal request to the president.

Floods since Jan. 19 have damaged about 6,200 homes and caused $25 million in damage to public facilities, such as roads, bridges, public buildings and water and sewer systems, according to estimates from state and federal damage assessment teams.

The help includes temporary housing, grants, low-interest loans to cover uninsured private and business property losses, and other relief programs to help individuals and families.

James Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, told Caperton that thorough information provided with West Virginia's request enabled federal officials to respond quickly.

■ Farm losses, 2A
■ Flood briefs, 2A
■ Senate flood relief, 7A

"The quick turnaround on our response is indicative of the concern President Clinton and FEMA have for our need for federal assistance," Caperton said.

Counties included in the declaration are Brooke, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Marshall, Mason, Monroe, Ohio, Pendleton, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, Summers, Tucker, Tyler, Webster, Wetzel and Wood.

Federal funding is available to reimburse 75 percent of the repair or replacement costs of damaged roads, bridges, public buildings, and water and sewer systems in the affected counties, except for Hampshire, Mason and Wood, Witt said.

Funding also will be provided for approved projects designed to mitigate future disaster risks in all 21

See DISASTER, 9A

Gazette photos by Chris Dorst

From left, Bridget Agapito, Dawn White, Meredith Harden and Damaris Malave help clear the backyard of Alderson resident Roy Grimes on Thursday. The women, on furlough from the Women's Federal Correctional Institute, said they expected the work to go on for about two weeks.

Chas. Gazette 1/26/96

Help arrives from churches, prison

By Dawn Miller
STAFF WRITER

ALDERSON — Two inmates furloughed from the Women's Federal Correctional Institute sought out the home of their correctional officer on Thursday to help her clean up mud and debris left by the Greenbrier River on Sunday.

"It is hard work, but people should pull together," said Deborah, an inmate who spent eight hours helping correctional officer Carrilyn Mullins-Carey.

Deborah and her partner Christy were among 200 inmates who volunteered to help Alderson residents clean up, Mullins-Carey said.

"She's very fair and very professional," Deborah said of their favorite officer.

"We wouldn't be here helping her if she wasn't," Christy added.

The two women would only identify themselves by their first names.

Church members, college students and residents from nearby Monroe County also came to move debris, wash dishes and disinfect basements.

"It could have been us," said Judy Lapp, a Gap Mills resident who, with a group of Mennonite men and women, scrubbed and bleached the basement of Virginia Martin.

"It's different than other cleaning," said Jolene Yoder. "You see something get done."

Mennonite women and those from the prison went door to door on Thursday, boots and skirts muddied, offering their help.

"You can't do without it," said Roy Grimes.

He directed women inmates to his backyard, where they pulled timbers and boards from a pile to be hauled off by National Guard trucks. The debris used to be a wall on the back of another house more than a block away.

He had stowed some tools and other valuables on the roof of a small shelter beside his garage.

"The water got it anyway," Grimes said.

On higher ground, women in the basement of the Old Greenbrier Baptist Church happily chopped watermelon and other fruits for supper.

The church has been feeding as many as 50 for breakfast, 350 for lunch and 125 for supper daily.

"I have not paid one penny for this food," said the Rev. Rick Curtis, gesturing to the well-stocked, makeshift pantry.

Kroger donated 250 gallons of milk and racks of fresh bread. Subway donated 75 sandwiches one

See ALDERSON, 9A

Glenna Yoder (left), Doris Schwartz and Judy Lapp help clean the basement of Virginia Martin in Alderson.

Vol. 15 No. 28 Valley Ranger Wednesday, January 24, 1996 O m M L

Flood Devastates Greenbrier Valley

By Tina Alvey

Thirty inches of fresh snow blankets the ground by nightfall on Sunday, January 7.

Twelve additional inches of snow falls four days later amid temperatures so cold, nothing can melt in the interim between major snowstorms.

With 42 inches of snow on the ground in Greenbrier County and significantly more in the mountains to the north, local emergency workers fervently hope for a slow, steady melt over the course of several days.

Instead, an unseasonable warm spell coupled with a night of rain dissolves the mass of snow, funneling the moisture into streams and rivers and unleashing the inevitable floodwaters on the valley's communities.

The Greenbrier River crested in Marlinton at 3 p.m. on Friday, January 19, at 20', more than a foot higher than the crest reported during the flood of 1985.

More than 13 hours later, the river crested in Alderson at 25', slightly higher than the '85 crest.

Parallels to the flood of '85 are inevitable. Causing millions of dollars in property damage and 47 deaths, the '85 flood was what is termed the "100-year flood"—meaning a flood of that magnitude should occur only once every century.

Barely ten years later, however, Greenbrier Valley residents find themselves digging mud out of their homes and businesses once more, tallying their losses and making an increasingly tough decision on whether to rebuild yet again or simply abandon property the river seems determined to claim.

A woman in Pocahontas County put it best when she said, "At first I was relieved that this one didn't seem to take as much of people's possessions as the '85 flood did. But now, I'm just angry. Why wasn't something done after that flood to prevent this from happening again? Why weren't we protected from having to go through this again?"

According to figures compiled by the Greenbrier County Office of Emergency Services, the property losses this year could be at least as high as they were in 1985.

Those estimates show Ronceverte and Alderson suffering the highest number of businesses with water damage, while many communities, including those two, saw the water sweep through a substantial number of homes.

Ronceverte's estimated total is 32 businesses and 152 houses in the water.

In Alderson, 30 businesses, 250 houses and one church were damaged to some extent. At least 80 Alderson residents were evacuated to shelters, while many others stayed with relatives or friends.

Four Caldwell businesses were damaged in the flood, as well as 65 houses and one church.

In Rupert, the toll was eight businesses, 122 houses and one church. In that community, some 41 people were evacuated into shelters.

One business in Rainelle reported water damage, but data from the Lilly Park subdivision was unavailable to OES staff at this time, according to Rudy Holbrook, the executive director of the Greenbrier County agency. He said the Lilly Park area contains numerous houses, and he is certain there was flood damage in that section of the town.

Holbrook said no information on damage totals is yet available from the Renick area.

Holbrook was reluctant to put a dollar value on the damage, saying he would now pass the information along to the state OES in Charleston, where "they will put a figure on it."

Rather than sit back and wait for the government to help in the rebuilding effort, local residents with insurance should look to their insurers as the first line of defense, Holbrook advised.

"People with insurance should get their insurance companies on board as quickly as possible," Holbrook said. This haste is necessary because of the magnitude of the flooding along the Ohio River, he explained.

"I believe the state may have to divert the National Guard to the Ohio River area," Holbrook warned. "That

Continued on Page 3

Ronceverte City Council member Tom Morgan and Chief of Police Bill Rose measure the high water mark on the front of Ronceverte's City Hall at 82 inches. All the front windows and doors were broken, and venetian blinds and assorted paper pokes through the broken window. (J. C. Browning photo)

20 Cents (USPS-768-060) Vol. 91 No. 218 Wednesday, November 6, 1985

Aftermath Of Flood Tragic

A gloomy sky illuminates the flood damage in Ronceverte yesterday as rising Greenbrier River waters washed a small building 50 yards from its foundation to rest against a light pole. On the right is Appalachian Electronics, which received heavy flood damage.

By Nancy Rose
and Frank Spicer

Record flooding along the Greenbrier River took a tragic toll of lives and property as the rising waters wiped out portions of Caldwell, Ronceverte, Alderson, Renick and Marlinton.

Four lives were lost in Pocahontas County to the raging river. Water eight feet high covered much of the downtown area, and one person said that "Marlinton was going to be a ghost town for a long time after this." The river crested at 18½ feet, which is 8½ feet above flood stage.

The rising Greenbrier backed Howard's Creek into Caldwell, flooding almost all of the homes on the south side of Route 60 there. Firewood, gas tanks and much other debris floated in the brackish waters as residents watched their homes fill with water in shocked silence.

In Ronceverte, City Manager Keith Brown termed the Monroe Avenue and River Oaks area "total losses". Hundreds of people were evacuated by boat when floodwaters made roads impassable. Rescue efforts continued into the late afternoon Tuesday. Floodwaters reached as far as Main Street in Ronceverte. The Ronceverte substation of West Virginia Power received major damage, according to Brown, causing a power outage that started Tuesday morning and continued in certain areas as of press time today. Areas affected include all of Ronceverte, Caldwell, parts of Lewisburg and areas north. Crews were working to restore power, but no definite time for restoration was given.

The flood also contaminated Ronceverte's water supply, leaving the city with good water only in its tanks. Residents there are urgently requested to use drinking water as sparingly as possible until the pumping station and lines can be cleared.

The Greenbrier crested 10 feet above flood stage in Ronceverte at 3 p.m. Tuesday.

In Alderson, the river crested at a record 25 feet, 11 feet above flood stage, disrupting travel and flooding homes and businesses along Route 60 in Alderson and further south toward Hinton.

In Renick, Mayor Betty Yates said that all of the homes near the bridge were either washed away or suffered extensive damage. The water crested there at 24 feet, 7 feet above flood stage. The bridge at Anthony, washed away Tuesday by raging waters, lodged approximately two miles above the Greenbrier River bridge at Caldwell, according to a late report.

Heroic efforts by rescue workers kept the death toll to zero throughout the flooded areas in Greenbrier County. No official estimates of property damage have been made, although the total could exceed $5 million.

In Caldwell, rising flood waters filled this one-story house in a field across Route 60 from the restaurant at the stockyard.

Looking east on Route 60 from the Stockyard area, fast running water covered 200 yards of roadway, and reached the floor of the bridge across the Greenbrier.

The Greenbrier River was still rising in Caldwell at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, and there was no business at the Ashland Station on Rt. 60 with the gas pumps, going, going, gone! (D. Simpson photo)

Accidents Reported

By NANCY ROSE

The following accidents were recently investigated by the Greenbrier County Sheriff's Department:

A Pemberton, WV, man escaped injury when the vehicle he was driving collided with a tree Friday,

Cloudy

Partly cloudy today with highs in the low to mid 50s. Mostly clear tonight with lows in the mid 30s. Increasing cloudiness Thursday with highs in the mid 50s. Probability of precipitation is near zero today and tonight.

THE West Virginia Daily News

LEWISBURG RONCEVERTE | COVINGTON, VA. WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS | RAINELLE MARLINTON | RUPERT CHARMCO | FAIRLEA WILLIAMSBURG | UNION ALDERSON

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Obituary

THE West Virginia Daily News

LEWISBURG RONCEVERTE COVINGTON, VA. WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS RAINELLE MARLINTON RUPERT CHARMCO FAIRLEA WILLIAMSBURG UNION ALDERSON

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Greenbrier Rampages; Caldwell, Other Areas Evacuated

More hard rains than the ground could absorb have caused extensive flooding along the Greenbrier and its tributaries. A late-morning report said that the Anthony bridge broke away from the banks of the Greenbrier and is "floating downstream in one piece", threatening the bridges at Caldwell and Ronceverte.

The rising waters of the Greenbrier have isolated Marlinton, where residents have been evacuated. The town is without electricity or phone service, according to reports at presstime.

A spokesman in Alderson said this morning that any residents who live near the Greenbrier River should "get out -- NOW" -- and save their lives rather than worry about their property.

Ronceverte's water supply has been contaminated by the flood waters and residents are advised to seek drinking water elsewhere.

The 219 bridge across the Greenbrier at Ronceverte has been closed to traffic, and late reports indicated that the Route 60 bridge at Caldwell was due to be closed until the Greenbrier's flood waters have receded to safe levels.

There were no reports as of press time today that indicated how high above flood stage the Greenbrier would rise, or at what time the river would crest.

Officials said that any residents who live close to the river should evacuate to higher ground until after the river has crested and it is safe to return to their homes.

The rising waters of the Greenbrier River, a result of days of rain, entered Appalachian Electronics and other businesses and homes along Monroe Avenue in Ronceverte.

Island Park in Ronceverte is completely covered by muddy flood waters. It was not known at press time when the Greenbrier would crest, or at what level.

Burdette's Restaurant at Fort Spring, usually threatened when the Greenbrier is in flood, suffered water damage today.

Rising waters approach the bottom of the old bridge in Alderson.

Two rescue workers survey the rising water and the damage in the Ronceverte bridge area this morning.

AREA OBITUARIES

DOWDY

Mrs. Marie Webb Dowdy, 72, of Glace, died Monday, November 4, at home following a short illness.

Born July 15, 1913, at Glace, she was a daughter of the late H.P. and Carrie R. McGrady Webb.

Mrs. Dowdy was a member of the Presbyterian Church.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Eugene Kelly Dowdy.

Survivors include a son, Gary K. Dowdy, at home; three daughters, Carrie Hoke of Kates Mountain, Josephine Morgan of Pierport and Peggy Gilbert of Wakeman, Ohio; a brother, H.P. Webb Jr. of White Sulphur Springs; eight grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Funeral services will be Thursday at 2 p.m. in the Glace Chapel with the Rev. Stuart McMurray officiating. Burial will be in the Dowdy Cemetery at Glace.

Friends may call Wednesday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Shanklin Funeral Home in White Sulphur Springs and at the church one hour prior to the service.

The family may be reached at the home of H.P. Webb Jr., 418 Central Avenue, White Sulphur Springs.

McCOMB

Mrs. Mabel Sarah McComb, 88, of Alvon, died Monday, November 4, in the Alleghany Regional Hospital, Low Moor, Va. following a short illness.

Born Jan. 18, 1897, at Alvon, she was a daughter of the late William S. and Virginia Harlow Waid.

Mrs. McComb was a member of the Alvon United Methodist Church.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Harvey G. McComb in 1975.

Survivors include a son, William H. McComb of Charleston, S.C.; four daughters, Gladys McCollam and Helen Trainer, both of White Sulphur Springs, Gale Watson and Juanita Fell, both of Charleston, S.C.; four sisters, Winnie Perry, Juanita Rucker, Kathleen Ramsey and Nellie Boggs, all of White Sulphur Springs; seven grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and a great great granddaughter.

Services will be Wednesday at 2 p.m. at the Alvon United Methodist Church with the Rev. Lowell O'Dell officiating. Burial will be in the church cemetery.

Friends may call today from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Shanklin Funeral Home in White Sulphur Springs and at the church one hour prior to the service.

Light Rain

Lingering light rain and drizzle, possibly mixed with snow. Highs around 40. Rain likely tonight, changing to light snow. Lows in the mid 30s. Mostly cloudy Wednesday with highs around 50.

Second Section

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Second Section
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Unearthing frontier history in Green Bank

Drew Tanner
Staff Writer

In a field in Green Bank, 250 year-old fragments of history were uncovered this weekend.

A small team of archeologists led by Kim and Steven McBride, of the Kentucky Archeological Survey, scoured the former site of Warwick Fort, at the home of Bob Sheets and his family in Green Bank, Saturday and Sunday.

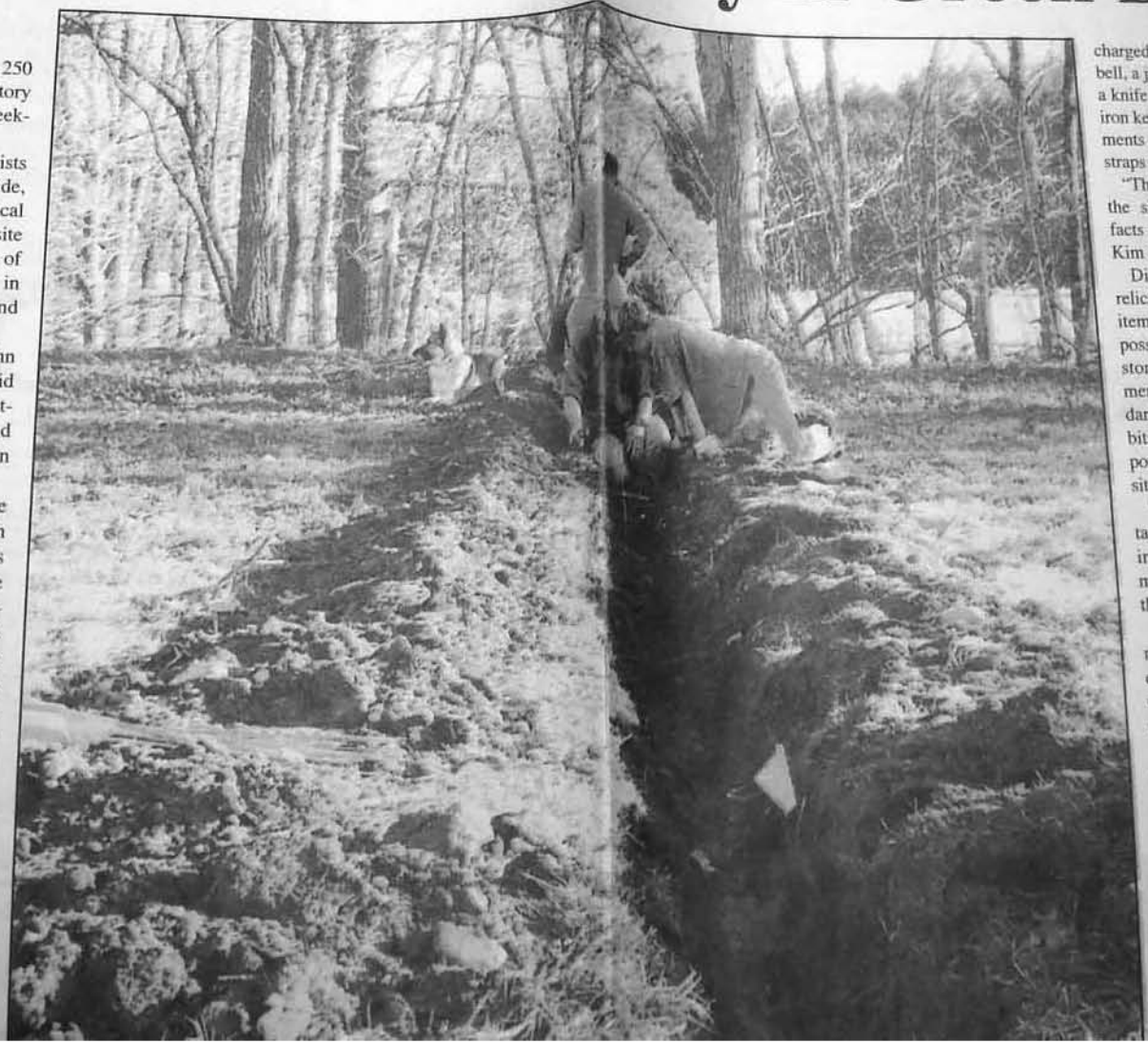
The fort was named for John Warwick, whom Sheets said was his own great-great-great-great-great grandfather, and whose 18th century log cabin was originally near the site.

Situated near the confluence of Deer Creek and the North Fork of Deer Creek, the fort was likely established to protect the growing population of white settlers in Green Bank from Native American raids, according to Kim, who is co-director of the Kentucky Archeological Survey.

"The forts were primarily used as a place of refuge for the settlers," Kim continued.

During most of the time since the Revolutionary War, the property has been in the Warwick-Sheets family.

The McBrides visit to the site came as a follow-up to their 1990 survey of approximately 40 similar fort sites in the Greenbrier Valley.



charged lead musketball, a cow bell, a jaw harp, a fragment from a knife blade, fragments of cast-iron kettles and other metal fragments thought to be from metal straps or utensils.

"The hand-wrought nails are the single most common artifacts we find on these fort sites," Kim said.

Digging for metal colonial relics, the team also discovered items that pre-dated the fort, possibly by more than 800 years: stone projectile points, fragments of earthen pottery and darkened areas of soil containing bits of charcoal, indicating a possible Native American hearth site.

"Being a pre-historic site certainly makes it more interesting," Kim said, "but it also makes it more difficult to find the fort."

On Sunday, some of the site's more interesting features were excavated and sifted in search of more clues to the fort's history and occupants.

One such feature yielded still more shards of Native American pottery.

The McBrides will take the artifacts to Kentucky to be cleaned, analyzed and catalogued, according to Kim. Once that process is complete, what to do with the artifacts will be left to Sheets' discretion, she continued.

Sheets said he would like to

County.

Before coming back to the site, the couple spent time poring over historic documents concerning the fort.

"We were searching through the applications of the Revolutionary War vets who were applying for pensions, and you get a sense of which forts they refer to more," Kim explained.

Warwick Fort was mentioned more than most, Kim continued.

"We initially thought some of these references were to the Clover Lick Fort... which also has a Warwick family connection," Kim explained, "but subsequent research has suggested... that when they say Warwick, they mean here."

Records show the fort was constructed by 16 of Captain George Moffet's company from Augusta County, Virginia.

According to records found by Steven, each man was paid 15 pounds for six days of work on the fort.

One of those 16 was Joseph Wadell, who had many descendants in Pocahontas County, according to Steven, staff archeologist for the Kentucky Archeological Survey.

One of those descendants was local historian James Woodell, who brought the McBrides to the site in 1990.

Based on his research of the site, Steven estimated the fort was constructed around June, 1774, just as white settlements in the Deer Creek Valley were beginning to take hold.

"The main force, really, on the frontier were the militia," Steven continued.

"When Moffet's company came and built this, there were probably around 50 or so [men]," explained Steven. "And then George Matthews company came. He had a smaller company, maybe about 30 or so."

When Matthews' company left for the battle of Point Pleasant in 1774, continued Steven, 16 men were left to guard the fort under William Kennerly.

At any given time, about 25 men, or a sergeant's command, might be stationed at the fort, Steven added.

Because of previous raids by Native Americans that hindered settlement in the 1750s and 1760s, white settlers in the area kept on their guard

"They'd send out people they called Indian spies, what we'd call scouts now," Steven explained. "They'd watch all the paths to see if Indians were around. If they were, [the scouts] would send an alarm and the settlers would then leave their cabins and come into the fort. So in times of alarm, you could have had quite a few settlers in here besides militia... 50 to 100 or so. It could have been kind of crowded."

During years when there was heavy Native American traffic through the area, the settlers might stay at the fort for most of the summer, Steven added.

In such times, large groups of settlers might go out from the fort, under the guard of the militia, to work each other's farms, Kim added.

"There was a fairly sizable raid in 1780," Steven noted. "[Native Americans] attacked the Drennan settlement in Edray. Militia were actually sent out of here to go down there and try to intercept the Native Americans."

"It was part of the Revolutionary period, but it was also part of the whole westward expansion," Kim observed.

Today, the fort's presence is all but indiscernible in Bob Sheet's field, and the only raids Green Bank residents encounter come in the form of busloads of tourists bound for the National Radio Astronomy Observatory

"One of the things we're interested in today is the real shape of [the fort]," Kim added, "because the records don't say that."

Based on the design of other forts the McBrides have researched in the Greenbrier Valley, Steven said the fort was likely to have been a diamond shaped structure, with sides 110' long and guarded by two bastions at opposite corners."

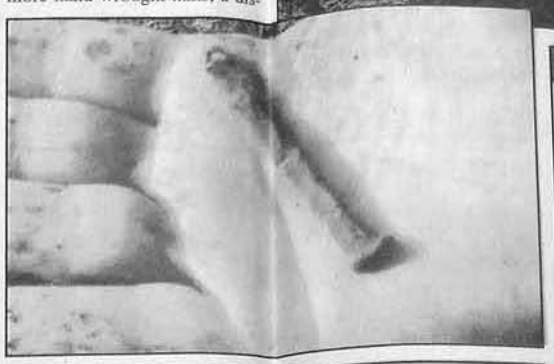
On Saturday, the team, joined by the Sheets family, spent most of the day combing the site with metal detectors. Each time the metal detector beeped, a small orange flag was put in place to mark the spot and the hits were carefully excavated with shovels and trowels.

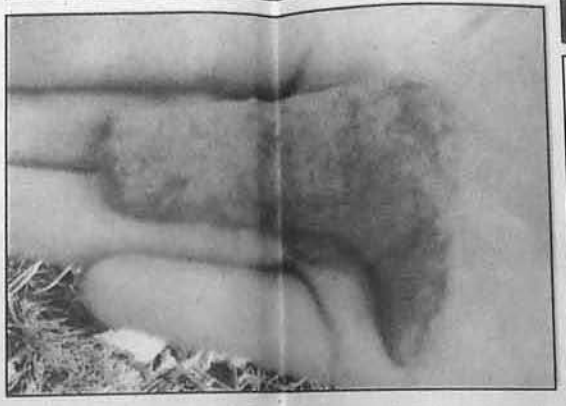
During their 1990 survey of the site, Kim said they found a lead musketball, some hand-wrought nails and a pipe stem.

By late Saturday afternoon, more than 100 of the little orange flags dotted the site. The artifacts unearthed included more hand-wrought nails, a dis-

MARTIN LOCKMAN PEERS into a trench dug by archeologists to gain a window back in time through the soil strata. The lighter, yellow clay subsoil made it easier for the team to identify historic features in the soil, identified by the red and orange flags. Relics of both colonial America and indigenous America were unearthed at the site. *Photo by D. Tanner*

family's collection, which includes several similar specimens from their property.





THREE ORANGE FLAGS (top) **mark metal detector hits on the former site of Warwick Fort in Green Bank. More than 100 flags marked the historic site by the end of Saturday afternoon. Excavation of a hit might yield centuries-old relics, such as a hand-wrought nail (middle left), a musket ball (middle right), a fragment from a cast-iron kettle** (bottom left), **or a shard of Native American pottery (bottom right). The team from the Kentucky Archeological Survey will clean, analyze and catalog each of the objects found on the site with the hope of gaining insight into the colonial fort and its inhabitants.** *Photos by D. Tanner*